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[54] METHODS AND APPARATUS FOR DYNAMIC MENU GENERATION IN A MENU DRIVEN COMPUTER SYSTEM

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[57] ABSTRACT

A computer hardware (FIG. 1) and software (FIG. 2) system uses a plurality of multilevel, hierarchical menus (FIG. 3) to access basic system capabilities. The menu system is made flexible, and responsive to the needs of individual users by means of a menu table (FIGS. 4 and 7) containing the menu entry text for all menus, the identity of the menu on which the entry is to appear, and the action to be taken if that menu entry is selected. The menu table can be edited by the user (15) in response to local needs and is used to generate (FIG. 5) all menus of the menu system dynamically, on the fly, as needed. In one embodiment, the menu table is broken up into separate tables for each menu level. In another embodiment, secondary menu item selection criteria are added to the menu table entries to further condition menu entry selection on user attributes such as geography or time.

15 Claims, 6 Drawing Sheets

MENU TABLE		
ITEM TEXT	MENU	ACTION
TEXT FOR ENTRY 1 IN MENU A-1	A-1	DISPLAY B-1
TEXT FOR ENTRY 2 IN MENU A-1	A-1	DISPLAY B-2
TEXT FOR ENTRY 3 IN MENU A-1	A-1	DISPLAY B-3
TEXT FOR ENTRY n IN MENU A-1	A-1	DISPLAY B-n
TEXT FOR ENTRY 1 IN MENU B-1	B-1	DISPLAY C-1
TEXT FOR ENTRY 2 IN MENU B-1	B-1	DISPLAY C-2
TEXT FOR ENTRY n IN MENU B-1	B-1	DISPLAY C-n
TEXT FOR ENTRY 1 IN MENU B-2	B-2	DISPLAY C-n+1
TEXT FOR ENTRY 2 IN MENU B-2	B-2	DISPLAY C-n+2
TEXT FOR ENTRY n IN MENU B-n	B-n	DISPLAY C-2n
TEXT FOR ENTRY 1 IN MENU B-n	B-n	DISPLAY C-n(n-1)+1
TEXT FOR ENTRY 2 IN MENU B-n	B-n	DISPLAY C-n(n-1)+2
TEXT FOR ENTRY n IN MENU B-n	B-n	DISPLAY C-nn
TEXT FOR ENTRY 1 IN MENU M-1	M-1	EXECUTE P-1
TEXT FOR ENTRY 2 IN MENU M-1	M-1	EXECUTE P-2
TEXT FOR ENTRY n IN MENU M-1	M-1	EXECUTE P-n
TEXT FOR ENTRY 1 IN MENU M-2	M-2	EXECUTE P-n+1
TEXT FOR ENTRY 2 IN MENU M-2	M-2	EXECUTE P-n+2
TEXT FOR ENTRY n IN MENU M-2	M-2	EXECUTE P-2n
TEXT FOR ENTRY 1 IN MENU M-n	M-n	EXECUTE P-n(n-1)+1
TEXT FOR ENTRY 2 IN MENU M-n	M-n	EXECUTE P-n(n-1)+2
TEXT FOR ENTRY n IN MENU M-n	M-n	EXECUTE P-nn